

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claims 36-41 have been canceled, and claims 1, 8, 22, and 42 have been amended. The amendments to claims 1, 8, and 22 are for presentation only and do not change the scope of the claims. The amendments to claims 7 and 42 are to correct typographical errors. It is submitted that these amendments do not raise any new issues, and accordingly, should be entered.

Claims 1-18, 21-35 and 42-47 are pending in the present application. Independent claims 1, 22 and 42 are directed to a polarizer. Independent claim 8 is directed to a polarizing plate. Claims 2-18 and 21 are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 1, claims 23-35 are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 8, and claims 43-47 are dependent on claim 42.

In the Office Action, the Examiner has withdrawn claims 36-41 from consideration as being directed to a different invention.

Since claims 36-41 have been canceled, this issued is moot.

Next, in the Office Action, claim 42 is objected to because of a typographical error (“strating” instead of “starting”) and alleged lack of antecedent basis for the term “starting material.”

The expression “for a strating material” has been replaced by “used as a starting material.” Accordingly, it is submitted that the objection should be withdrawn.

Next, it is indicated in the Office Action that the prior art rejections have been maintained.

Thus, claims 1, 5, 7-9, 12-15, 18, 22, 28 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US 5,914,073 to Kobayashi et al. (Kobayashi).

Further, claims 1-18 and 21-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over US

6,361,838 to Miyatake et al. (Miyatake) in view of Kobayashi and US 6,065,457 to Aminaka (Aminaka). Claims 42-47 are also included in this rejection. It is alleged in the Office Action that the features recited in these claims are process features which are not given patentable weight.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

As a preliminary, it is again submitted that the shrinkage force feature recited in claims 1 and 8 is not in itself a process step of these claims, but a specific property of the polarizer or polarizer plate, which can be measured by the measurement steps set forth in the claim. In order to stress this point, the presentation of claims 1, 8 and 22 has now been modified to further clarify that the heating step is not a feature of the polarizer but a step in the measurement of the shrinkage force. Thus, the shrinkage force is a property feature of the polarizer, which is measured by (i) heating the polarizer, and (ii) measuring the shrinkage force, as recited in these claims. An advantage of the relatively low shrinkage force in the polarizer as defined in the present invention is the prevention of hue variations in the display panel.

Turning to the rejections, first, the rejection over Kobayashi is again respectfully traversed. Kobayashi does not directly concern a polarizer plate, but Kobayashi is directed to a protective film for a polarizer. Accordingly, Kobayashi does not disclose features of a polarizing film, in particular not its shrinkage force. As a result, Kobayashi directs the use of a prior art polarizer film having a high shrinkage force.

Specifically, the examples of Kobayashi, to which reference is made in the Office Action, describe a protective film, not a polarizer film. Thus, the thickness of 20 microns to 1 mm (col. 3, line 35) is that of the transparent resin film and the thickness of 0.1 to 30 microns (col. 4, line 51) is that of the hardened resin layer, both of which are part of a protective film for a polarizer, but not

part of the polarizer film (see Kobayashi at col. 2, lines 52-55: "A protective film for a polarizing plate comprising a transparent resin film, and provided on at least one side of the resin film, a hardened layer composed of a composition comprising an ultraviolet ray hardenable polyol acrylate resin").

In summary, the teaching of Kobayashi concerns a protective film and not a polarizing film. As a result, based on Kobayashi, a person of the art would not have attempted to reduce shrinkage force in a polarizer, because that person would not have expected any improvements or advantages from such a reduction. Therefore, Kobayashi does not anticipate, and does not render obvious, the presently claimed invention.

Second, the rejection over a combination of references including Miyatake is also respectfully traversed. It is correct that Miyatake discloses an optical film that may be a reflective polarizer at col. 8, line 7, and that this polarizer may function as a brightness enhancer in cooperation with a reflective back light. However, Miyatake teaches the use of "commercial polarizing film" (col. 10, line 7), i.e., prior art polarizing film which has a high shrinkage force.

Further, regarding the thickness requirements, Miyatake only discloses a thickness of "generally from 1 μm to 3 mm, preferably from 5 μm to 1 mm, more preferably from 10 to 500 μm " (col. 5, lines 48-49) for the scattering film. This scattering film is not a polarizer, since it is adhered to a polarizer to form an optical film as disclosed in the Examples of Miyatake. Accordingly, Miyatake does not teach or suggest a shrinkage force in the order of the presently claimed invention.

The deficiencies of Miyatake are not remedied in the other cited references. Accordingly, the present claims are not obvious over the cited combination of references including Miyatake.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejections should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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